

Fall 8-15-2001

ENG 3005-001-002: Technical Communication

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TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Dr. Angela Vietto

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Office: 3345 Coleman Hall

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Office hours: ~~W 2-3~~ ^{M 11-12}; T 10-12; many other times by appointment

Class web site: <http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfarv/3005.html>

Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to improve your ability to communicate complex information in an audience-centered way.

Achieving that objective requires improving your abilities to

- think about all decisions regarding a document from the point of view of your audience;
- recognize and adapt the conventions of various types of technical writing;
- research thoroughly answers to practical questions using reliable sources;
- write clear and concise prose;
- create effective visual aids and integrate them into documents; and
- design attractive documents.

Text

Anderson, *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*, 4th ed.

**Other
Required
Materials**

an email account (EIU or web-based) that you check regularly

at least two 3.5-inch floppy disks

userid and password for EIU email account

(Note: 1. You do NOT have to use the EIU account for email; 2. If you have not picked up the id and password for this account, you must do so by going to ITS in Room 1053 of the Student Services Building; be sure to take your Panther Card with you.)

**Class
Format**

This class will meet in the computer lab and in a regular classroom on alternate weeks.

The ability to make technology work for you as a communication tool is central to this course. If you feel uncomfortable with the level of computer use required by this course, please talk with me as soon as possible. I am available to help you develop the necessary skills.

**Academic
Honesty**

Dishonesty of any sort in this course can result in a failing grade for the course.

**Disability
Information**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Projects & Grading

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Writing Group Assignments (quizzes and case presentations) | 100 points |
| 1. Document Production Skills Project | 60 points |
| 2. Technical Document Portfolio I | 60 points |
| 3. Hot Topic Summary | 75 points |
| 4. Legislative Impact Memo | 75 points |
| 5. Web Site Analysis/Recommendation | 75 points |
| 6. Visual Aid Project | 75 points |
| 7. Clarity and Concision Project | 75 points |
| 8. Document Design Project | 75 points |
| 9. Job Application Package | 80 points |
| 10. Collaborative Grant Proposal | 150 points |
| Final Exam | 100 points |

Final Grades:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| A | 900-1000 |
| B | 800-899 |
| C | 700-799 |
| D | 600-699 |
| F | 599 and below |

Attendance

I strongly encourage you to attend class every session. Indeed, the best advice I can give you if you would like a high grade in this class is to attend class every session and ask for help whenever you need it. However, you will note that there is no section of the overall course grade devoted to attendance. Although I will not be deducting points for missed classes, the following policies apply to absences from this course:

- If you miss class for any reason on a day when a project is due, you are responsible for making sure the project gets to me by the time class begins, or requesting an extension before class begins. (See the policy on deadlines.)
- Missed quizzes must be made up within one week.
- Missed case presentations can not be made up.

Deadlines

Learning to meet deadlines is a critical part of learning to write for professional purposes. So in this course, the following policies will apply to meeting deadlines for final copies of projects:

1. If you miss a deadline for a final version of a project without having arranged for an extension prior to the due date, your grade on that project will be reduced by 10% of the total value of the project.
2. Work that is more than one week late without a previously arranged extension will not be accepted, unless you are absent from class for an extended period due to a documented illness or emergency.
3. No extensions will be granted for Project 10.

Extensions: To receive an extension, you must request it in person, by phone, or by email, **before** the deadline. You do not need to tell me why you need an extension, but you do need to tell me when you expect to have the project completed and submitted. Once we have agreed on a new deadline, the policies above apply to the new deadline.

Writing Groups

Early in the semester, I will assign you to a writing group. Throughout the semester, you will need to work with the members of your writing group to complete certain tasks, including quizzes.

You might also wish to work together beyond the required tasks (for example, you might choose to divide up the reading of resource materials for assignments and then share your notes with the rest of the group).

For each group meeting, choose a chair, recorder, and reporter (one person may serve as both recorder and reporter if you prefer). The chair is responsible for making sure that the group remains on task during meetings and for encouraging all members to participate. The recorder is responsible for taking minutes using the forms I will supply. The reporter will be the primary spokesperson for the group when presenting cases.

Revisions

You may if you wish revise one or more of Projects 2-9 for an improved grade (the grade on the revision will replace the original grade). Revisions will be accepted until the last day of class. The original project with my comments must be submitted along with the revised project. (Projects 1 and 10 are not eligible for optional revision.)

How to get the grade you want on a revision:

- (a) If you merely go through a document and correct all errors that I have marked, your grade will improve by only as much as I originally deducted for mechanical errors.
- (b) If you want to improve your grade more substantially, you must read my end comments carefully and make **substantive** revisions where needed as well as correcting all errors that I have marked and proofreading once more on your own (for errors I might have missed).
- (c) If you want to raise your grade by 20% or more of the total value of the project, you should follow the guidelines listed above under (b) and then meet with me to discuss what other revisions might be needed to raise the grade further.

Tentative Schedule of Classes

| Date | Location | Deadlines | In-class activities |
|-----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M Aug 20 | 3120 (lab) | | Introductions Projects 1 and 2 assigned |
| W Aug 22 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 1 |
| F Aug 24 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 1 |
| M Aug 27 | 3130 (classroom) | Project 1 due Quiz | Lecture/activity/discussion on audience-centered communication Writing groups assigned Project 2 discussed |
| W Aug 29 | 3130 (classroom) | | Project 3 assigned Demonstration/discussion of LEXIS/NEXIS |
| F Aug 31 | 3130 (classroom) | | Lecture/activity/discussion on summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and documenting sources |
| M Sept 3 | Labor Day Observed—No Class | | |
| W Sept 5 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 3 |
| F Sept 7 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 3 |
| M Sept 10 | 3130 (classroom) | Project 2 due Draft of Project 3 due Case presentation | Group work/case presentation using draft of Project 3 |
| W Sept 12 | 3130 (classroom) | Final copy of Project 3 due | Project 4 assigned Demonstration/discussion of Thomas.gov Practice of paraphrase and summary for complex documents |
| F Sept 14 | 3130 (classroom) | | Lecture/activity/discussion on persuasive techniques |
| M Sept 17 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 4 |

Tentative Schedule of Classes (continued)

| Date | Location | Deadlines | In-class activities |
|-----------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| W Sept 19 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 4 |
| F Sept 21 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 4 |
| M Sept 24 | 3130 (classroom) | Draft of Project 4 due Case presentation | Lecture/discussion on introductions and conclusions Group work/case presentation using draft of Project 4 |
| W Sept 26 | 3130 (classroom) | Final copy of Project 4 due | Project 5 assigned Lecture/discussion/activity on electronic communication |
| F Sept 28 | 3130 (classroom) | Quiz | Lecture/discussion on persuasion, continued |
| M Oct 1 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 5 |
| W Oct 3 | 3120 (lab) | Draft of Project 5 due Case presentation | Group work and case presentation using draft of Project 5 |
| F Oct 5 | Fall Break—No Class | | |
| M Oct 8 | 3130 (classroom) | Final copy of Project 5 due | Project 6 assigned Lecture/activity/discussion on effective visual aids |
| W Oct 10 | 3130 (classroom) | Quiz | Lecture/activity/discussion on integrating visual aids into documents |
| F Oct 12 | 3130 (classroom) | Bring projects 3, 4, 5 to class Case presentation | Group activity/case presentation using Projects 3, 4, 5 |
| M Oct 15 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 6 |
| W Oct 17 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 6 |
| F Oct 19 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 6 |
| M Oct 22 | 3130 (classroom) | Project 6 due | Project 7 assigned Lecture/activity/discussion on clarity and concision |

Tentative Schedule of Classes (continued)

| Date | Location | Deadlines | In-class activities |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| W Oct 24 | 3130 (classroom) | | Project 8 assigned Lecture/activity/discussion on document design |
| F Oct 26 | 3130 (classroom) | Quiz | Instructor available for consultation on Projects 7 / 8 |
| M Oct 29 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 7 and 8 |
| W Oct 31 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 7 and 8 |
| F Nov 2 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 7 and 8 |
| M Nov 5 | 3130 (classroom) | Drafts of Projects 7 & 8 due Case presentation | Group work and case presentation using Projects 7 / 8 |
| W Nov 7 | 3130 (classroom) | Final Projects 7 & 8 due | Projects 9 and 10 assigned Lecture/activity/discussion on job application packets |
| F Nov 9 | 3130 (classroom) | Quiz | Job application packets continued |
| M Nov 12 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 9 and 10 |
| W Nov 14 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 9 and 10 |
| F Nov 16 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Projects 9 and 10 |
| Nov 19-23 | Thanksgiving Recess—No Class | | |
| M Nov 26 | 3130 (classroom) | | Work time on Projects 9/10 |
| W Nov 28 | 3130 (classroom) | Final Project 9 due | Work time on Project 10 |
| F Nov 30 | 3130 (classroom) | | Work time on Project 10 |
| M Dec 3 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 10 |
| W Dec 5 | 3120 (lab) | | Work time on Project 10 |
| F Dec 7 | 3120 (lab) | Project 10 due Course evaluation | Course conclusion |